244 usually near the house, where they spread over kitchen roofs, sheds, and fences. Planting is in the week of Candelaria. No fruit is borne until the second year.

The tubers formed on the roots of the chayote plant, called chinchayote, are dug up every third year on New Year's day or shortly after. They are found about a yard and a half from the stalk at a depth of 2 feet. They are boiled
[252] or fried and eaten. In flavor and texture they are superior to potatoes, which they resemble. If the tubers are not removed every 3 years, they rot and the plant sickens and does not bear.[9]

Miscellaneous vegetables and herbs.—Green vegetables and herbs are usually grown in small garden plots within the patio or houseyard. Most important is cabbage, of which two varieties are grown, one which heads and one which does not. The latter is the more common, producing a cluster of large leaves along a stalk a foot or more in height. Cabbage is an essential ingredient of the universal meat dish, čurípo.

On rare occasions, other vegetables are grown, such as carrots, tomatoes, and onions. The latter two do not produce well in Cherán,
[262] and carrots and other vegetables have little place in Tarascan cookery.

[263] Almost every garden has a few herbs, the most common of which is *silantro* (kulántro), used to flavor meat dishes. Two mints (kuaʂitiniš and kuaʂitiniš kamáta akúa) are grown for use in atoles.

[278] Camomiles, *manzanillo*, of at least two types are grown as carminatives.

● 249 *Agave.*—Although agaves (akámba) are planted extensively along the ditches cut as field boundaries to keep out animals, relatively little use is made of them. There is some
[272] collection of the juice, *agua miel* (urápi). Some is consumed locally, but most of it is shipped to Uruapan. No native residents drink
[273] the juice after fermentation as *pulque*. Only wild agaves are roasted.

To secure the juice, according to description, a cavity is cut in the heart with a knife and the

[9] In Parícutin village, chayotes (apépo) are planted in stone-lined pits to protect the seeds from gophers. The pit is about 30 cm. deep. The pulp is carefully removed from the seeds, which are then carefully wrapped in maize husks and tied with the same material.

249 pulp is chopped. Three days later the chopped material is removed and the surface of the cavity is scratched with a rakelike implement. On the fourth day, collection of the juice begins twice daily. Each time juice is collected, the surface of the cavity is scratched with the rakelike implement. The juice is dipped out with a small pottery vessel and poured into a larger container. If the juice is to be shipped to Uruapan it is put in a 25-liter can. A good plant produces slightly more than 2 liters a day.

252 The bud of the wild agave is cooked in a round hole, 1 meter in diameter and 1 meter deep. The hole is filled with small stones to within 10 or 15 cm. of the top, and a large fire is built on top of the stones. When the fire dies down, the agave buds are thrown on it, covered with leaves of agaves and trees, and then sealed with earth. On the third day the oven is opened. The thick fleshy end of leaves of the smaller wild agave are also roasted. The season is from November to May.

Approximately 20 men in Cherán roast agave in season. They must eat sugar when the agave is cooking so that it will emerge sweet. [834] They must also abstain from sexual intercourse during the 3 days the agave is in the oven.[10]

245 *Pears.*—The most important fruit in Cherán is the pear. It is carried by traders as far as [439] Guerrero. Three types are recognized: *leche* (uérgamóte), *pardo* (ɬarápiti), and t'ačani (Spanish name unknown). The only significant difference recognized is that the three types mature at different times, although some say only the uérgamóte transports well.

245 Pear trees are always grafted on a rootstock of wild crab apple, *tejocote*. (This is a sloe-242 like fruit which bears a marked resemblance in flavor and appearance to the true crab apple.) The *tejocote* trunk is cut with a saw and then split. A pear graft is inserted at each end of the split, sealed in with wax, and wrapped in clean cloth. It is believed the grafts will grow only in January, February, and March, but a school teacher with experimental tendencies claims to have grown them at all seasons.

[194] [10] Agave is of varying importance in other towns. In Angáhuan the techniques are similar. The plant is known here as quiote; the leaves are called ɬíkua, the stalk or bud, ɬámaš. Monticoland Chilchota makes mescal. The leaves are cooked in earth ovens, macerated with clubs in cement tanks, fermented several days, then distilled. The Tarascan terminology relating to the agave and its processing survives in part.

244 262 European cabbage (*col, repollo*), which the Indians have thoroughly taken into their diet. Both the leaf and head varieties are cultivated. Almost every ekuáru in all Tarascan villages contains a small patch of cabbages, which are used for the famous čurípu, or meat and vegetable stew [94] (pl. 5). A more common stew (*repollo-šakuá*) is made of cabbage alone, flavored with red chile, onion, and silantro. The leaf cabbage is the 244 usual variety found in the Sierra. It is rarely planted by seed, but by replanting sprouts that occur at the base of the stalk. The plant is persistent, surviving the frosty Sierra winter; leaves are stripped off until the stock often reaches a meter in height. Other vegetables such as lettuce, radishes, carrots, peas, and turnips, although known in many parts of Tarasca since early colónial times, are today little cultivated or used in native cookery.

247 249 In addition to the food annuals, the ekuáru contains various medicinal and ornamental plants, mainly those of the Solanaceae, Fabaceae, and Compositae. In a great number of the house lots women plant a stalk or two of tobacco (*Nicotiana rustica*, andúmukua), used not for smoking, [276] [278] but as medicine.[95] The *trompeta* or *floripondio* (*Datura arborea*); *colorín* or p'oɹéŋéA (*Erythrina americana*); two euphorbias, *chupiri* (*E. calyculata*) and *flor de pascua* (*E. pulcherrima*); and the Old World *higuerilla* or castor bean (*Ricinus communis*) are not uncommon in the house gardens of the low country marginal to the Sierra. European Compositae, geraniums etc., make up most of the ornamental plants cultivated around the house.

Fruit culture in the ekuáru.—Practically every 245 house lot in most Tarascan villages contains a few fruit trees, both Old World and native. A definite climatic distribution of fruit types exists. In the Sierra are found only the cold-tolerant deciduous fruits such as the European peach, apple, pear, quince, and the native crab apple (*tejocote* or kaɹás) and cherry (*capulín* or šéngua). In the lowlands around the Sierra, however, both subtropical and cold-tolerant fruits are cultivated. The former include the Old World citrus (limes, oranges, lemons), figs, pomegranate (*granada de*

[94] Čurípu is eaten principally during the maize harvest period and on religious holidays.

[95] For example, in Pichátaro tobacco is taken for fever and is chewed to cure toothache.

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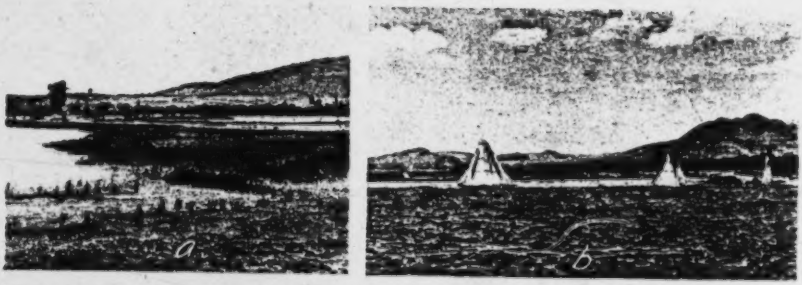

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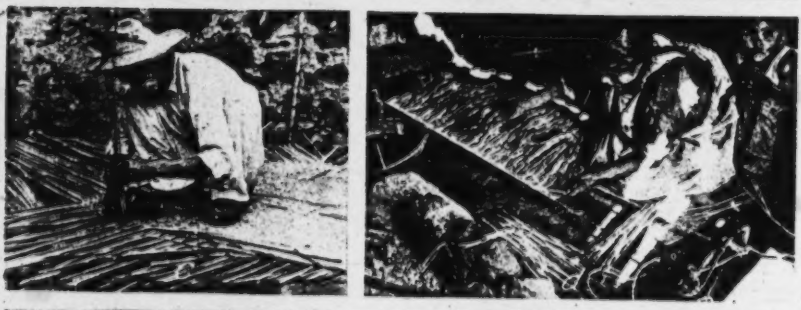

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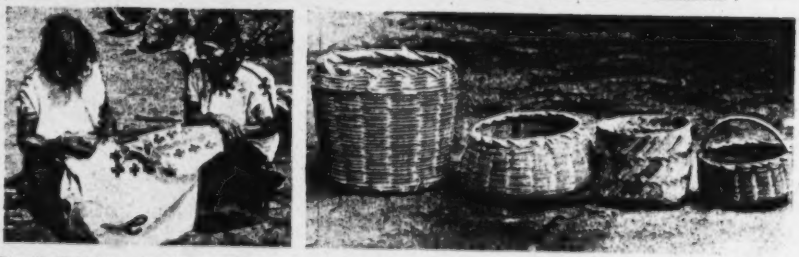

PLATE 12.—Textiles. a, A tule-cutter along the shore of Lake Pátzcuaro, between San Jerónimo and San Andrés. Many potters makers own their own tule-cutting boat, but sometimes portions of the brakes are leased to tule cutters, who harvest the reeds and distribute them to various villages around the lake. b, Harvesting tule, Janitzio Island, Lake Pátzcuaro. After partially drying in the sun, the reeds are bundled into mazapes and stacked in shocks. c, Weaving petates. Duarte's. Note the wooden mallet on the mat near the man's hands. d, Making sopetes. A masterpiece. Work is done inside the kitchen. Note the fourth, lower left. Palm leaves are kept moist by dipping them in the bowl of water at left. e, Embroidering a huipil or blouse. Tzurumútaro. f, Baskets woven of tule. The large one (left), called tuke, is used to carry bread and fruit. It is usually transported on the back in the npate. The flat round basket is called p'akúata and is used to carry fish and tamales. The trilled basket is a tlamal (the Tarascans call it "tamále") for tortillas. The handled basket at the right (simply named "uranda") is for carrying eggs, pitanchis, and other fish.

[End-plate 12]